

REMARKS

Entry of the above amendments is respectfully requested. Claims 1, 3, 7, 8, 12, 13, and 17 are hereby amended. Claims 5, 6, 15, and 16 are hereby canceled. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application is respectfully requested in light of the foregoing amendments and the remarks which follow.

Drawings

The drawings were objected to for the reasons stated in the Office action at paragraph 2 of page 2. The proposed drawing changes of the enclosed Annotated Marked-Up Drawing Sheets, the formal Replacement Sheets, and amendments to claims 3 and 13 are believed to address each of the issues raised.

Specifically, the drawings are now shown with proper cross-hatching (alternating heavy and light diagonal lines representing plastic material) for bushings 44 and 48 to address point 2a in the Office action.

Regarding point 2b, Applicants have amended claims 3 and 13 to replace "acts against the inner guard sleeve to bias" with "biases." Fig. 2 shows that the spring 90 biases (as opposed to acting against) the center guard sleeve axially toward the outer guard sleeve.

An erroneous reference numeral 44 and its lead line were deleted from Fig. 1 to correct a clerical error.

Thus, all of the drawing objections are believed to have been addressed and overcome by the proposed changes. Applicants thus ask that the drawing changes be accepted, and that the formal Replacement Sheets be substituted for the drawings previously of record.

Claims

A. Claims 8 -10, 17 and 18

Claims 8 and 17 have been amended to overcome the issues in paragraphs 5 and 6 on pages 2 and 3 of the above Office action.

Authorization for these amendments at this time was given by Examiner Binda during the aforementioned telephone interview. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's time and courtesy in conducting the telephone interview. Applicants thus respectfully request that pending claims 8 - 10, 17, and 18 be passed to issuance.

B. Claims 1 - 7, 11 - 16, and 19

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 5 and 6. Claim 7 has been amended to depend from claim 1 instead of claim 6. Claims 5 and 6 have been canceled. Claim 6 has been deemed to contain allowable subject matter.

Claim 12 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 15 and 16, with the center guard sleeve being linked to the inner guard sleeve. Claims 15 and 16 have been canceled. Claim 16 has been deemed to contain allowable subject matter.

Accordingly, in an effort to further this application to allowance, the amendments to claims 1 and 12 are made in compliance with the Office's position on the allowability of the claims application. These amendments, therefore, are believed suitable for entry into the record post final Office action. Applicants thus respectfully request that pending claims 1 - 4, 7, 11 - 14, and 19 be passed to issuance.

Conclusion

Applicants thus respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn and the application as amended be allowed.

No fees are believed due for consideration of this response. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees deemed necessary to Deposit Account No. 17-0055.

Respectfully submitted,

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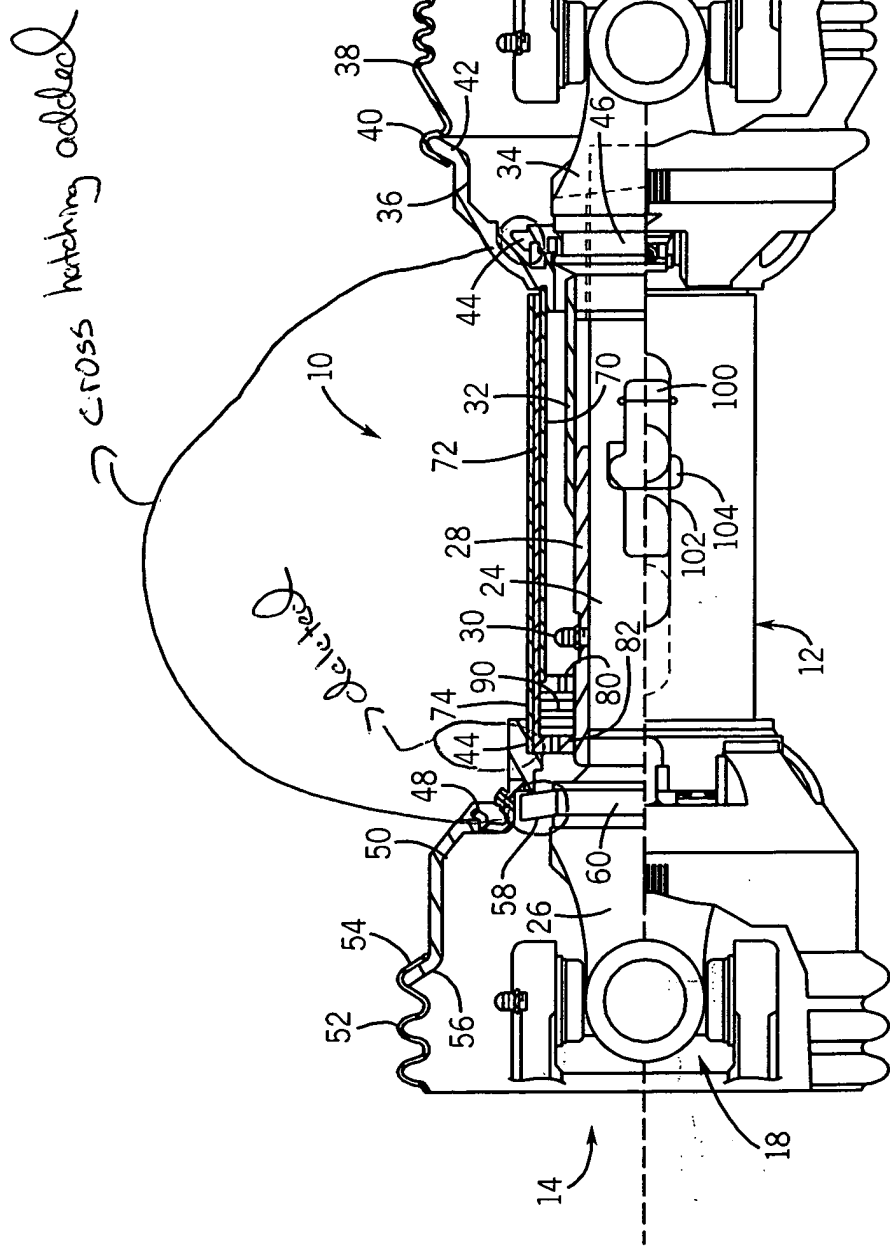
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DRAWING AMENDMENTS:

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Figs. 1 and 2. These sheets, which include Figs. 1 - 2, replace the original sheets including Figs. 1 - 2.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets

Annotated Sheets Showing Changes



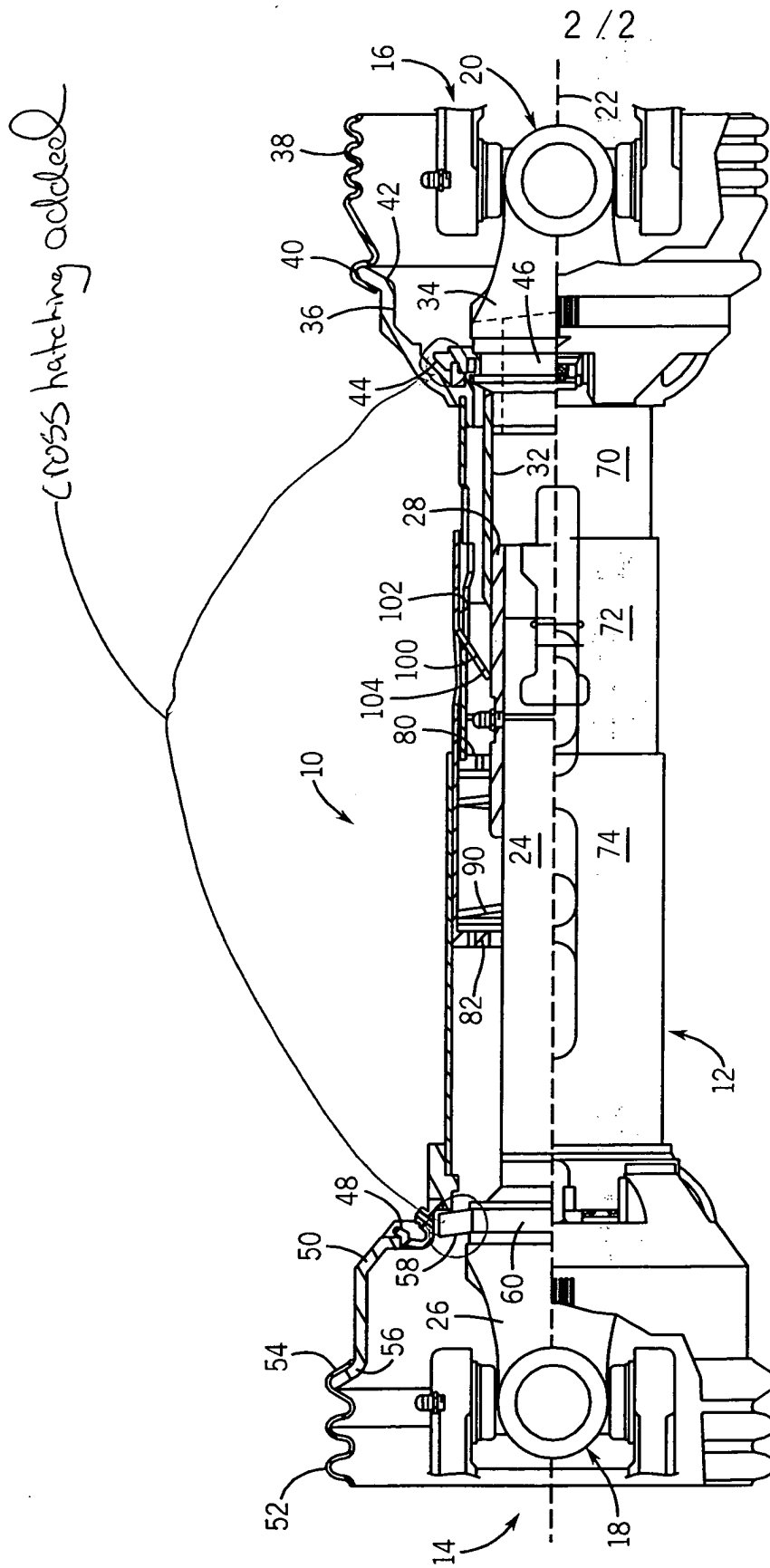


FIG. 2